**Helpline Volunteer**

**Role Description**

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| SARAC is a registered charity in Burton on Trent supporting people aged 11 years and over who are affected by sexual violence in Burton on Trent and surrounding areas of Staffordshire. Our helpline volunteers provide trauma informed front line support to adult clients through emotional support work. Part of this work enables victims and survivors to prepare for counselling.  We support our volunteers by providing extensive training in sexual abuse, the criminal justice system and emotional support skills. Volunteers have access to ongoing training, supervision with a counselling supervisor each month and regular monthly team meetings. |

**What the Role Involves**

Our helpline service is not a crisis line. Volunteers work on the helpline between 10am-7pm.

Volunteers are asked to complete one volunteer shift, for a minimum of 2 hours a week within the core opening hours. Our volunteers provide scheduled support calls at an agreed time with the client, on a weekly basis. These calls last on average around 30 minutes.

**Helpline Volunteers**

The helpline is a powerful service for clients needing someone to talk to. It requires the use of focused listening skills to build rapport with clients, to promote their wellbeing and explore the impact of trauma from sexual violence in a safe environment giving stabilisation.

Our volunteers are expected to:

* Understand, respect and uphold the ethos of SARAC and its work with survivors.
* Abide by confidentiality and data protection policies and procedures.
* Follow all SARAC policies and procedures.
* Consistently contact allocated clients every week.
* Accurately complete relevant documentation either online or paper based.
* Report any safeguarding concerns to the designated safeguarding officers.
* Provide 2 references.
* Complete a DBS (SARAC will support completion and any payment for this.)

**Role Commitments**

Helpline volunteers may deal with complex issues. SARAC is responsible for ensuring the wellbeing of our volunteers. To do this, we provide ongoing training and supervision.

The commitment required by volunteers to support their mental health is as follows:

* One supervision per month. These are conducted in a group setting with a qualified counselling supervisor and last around 2 hours. Volunteers are required to attend supervision to promote their own well-being and skills.
* One volunteer meeting per month. These are large team meetings which provide updates, new skills, training, showcases and tend to last 1.5-2 hours.

**Qualifications/Experience Required**

There are no pre-requisites for this role in terms of professional qualifications, however some experience, education or training in counselling, psychotherapy, support skills, criminology, psychology or any experience of volunteering in the third sector would be an advantage. We highly value personal life experience and we are pleased to accept applications from prospective volunteers without relevant qualifications/work experience.

**Training Requirements**

Helpline volunteers receive extensive training before they begin to support clients. This takes place over several weeks and you will be required to commit to all sessions, covering the following topics:

* Introduction to and understanding of sexual violence
* Intersectionality
* Client journey
* Trauma model
* Trauma responses
* Coping skills and strategies
* Support skills
* Suicide and self-harm
* Reporting and prosecuting
* Safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection

The training will give you skills to work with trauma and we appreciate that this is a big commitment, however this is what makes SARAC the specialist in our communities in this area.

The training will take place over a 2 week period.

Following the training, volunteers are mentored by current staff and/or volunteers, until they feel confident to complete the role. Finally there is a sign off and induction process.

**Out of Pocket Expenses**

Currently, volunteers are welcome to claim back expenses that are incurred whilst volunteering. This includes travel and parking fees up to a 70 mile round trip. Expenses are processed monthly and paid by BACS – bank details will be requested when the first claim is made.

Volunteers can also choose to donate their expenses back to the charity and if so, are encouraged to use GiftAid.

**Applying to Volunteer**

This is an application and interview process. The application form can be downloaded from our website [www.sarac.org.uk](http://www.sarac.org.uk) and should be returned to [staff@sarac.org.uk](mailto:staff@sarac.org.uk).

If you have any further queries, you can contact us by email at [staff@sarac.org.uk](mailto:staff@sarac.org.uk) or by telephone on 01283 535110.

We do not release our location for volunteering enquiries, however, you can write to us at: SARAC, PO BOX 3, BURTON ON TRENT, DE14 1ZT.